
Hooked on Healthy Fish!

A Woman's and Child's Guide to Eating Fish

If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, breastfeeding or the parent of a child 15 or younger, answer the following questions.

Do you or your child:

1. Eat walleye, northern pike or bass?
_____ yes _____no
2. Eat fish more than once a week all year long?
_____ yes _____no
3. Eat more than 6 ounces of canned tuna a week?
_____ yes _____no
4. Eat swordfish or shark?
_____ yes _____no

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, you can still eat fish, but you may want to change the *kinds of fish* you eat or *how often* you eat fish.

Some fish may contain mercury, which can harm children. If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, breastfeeding or a child 15 or younger, it is important for you to know what kinds of fish are safe, as well as how often you can eat fish.

Should I just stop eating fish?

No ... Fish are fun to catch and good to eat. Fish are high in protein and low in fat. The oils in fish are important for unborn and breastfed babies. And, eating fish may play a role in the prevention of heart disease in adults.

The benefits of eating fish outweigh the health risks as long as you follow guidelines about how much fish to eat.

For women who are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding and for children 15 or younger, we recommend the following:

Weekly

- One meal per week of canned light tuna. Light tuna is safer than *white or albacore* tuna.

OR

- One meal per week of breaded fish products (such as fish sticks or fingers) or sport fish* (such as sunfish, yellow perch, bullheads or salmon).

OR

Monthly

- One meal per month of any smaller-sized (less than 4 pounds) sport fish like bass, walleye, northern pike or catfish or purchased fish like halibut, orange roughy or fresh tuna. **If you choose these fish, do not eat any other fish for one month.**

Never

- Never eat larger (4 pounds or more) bass, catfish, muskie, sauger, walleye or northern pike, as well as any size of swordfish, shark, king mackerel or tilefish. Larger fish that feed on other fish have high levels of mercury.

*For more information about fish caught in North Dakota, visit www.health.state.nd.us/wq.
